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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, MARCH 21, 1855.

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Sketchings.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN opened its Thirtieth Annual Exhibition, Monday, March 12th. The display is small, owing to the smallness of the rooms, but consequently more choice than formerly, though there are still, we think, too many poor portraits and *absolutely bad* pictures, which neither honor the artists nor delight the public.

As a remarkable feature, we may say that the largest pictures are among the leading attractions; Durand's "In the Woods," and full length portraits by Hicks and Baker, being all not only unusually good, but unique and artistically interesting. The first-mentioned picture is one which we have been wishing for many years to see from the hand of the President, and it satisfies us more entirely than any landscape he has ever painted. It is a wild forest glade, treated with most masterly breadth, and almost pre-Raphaelite truth of detail. We shall say more of it in our criticisms at length. Hicks' full length is a noble, unaffected picture, and will do more for the artist's reputation than anything he has painted. Of its details, and those of other pictures, we must treat hereafter. Baker has daringly placed his subject out in the open air, with a view of the New York docks and Brooklyn as a background, giving most successfully a local and characteristic look to it as new as it is delightful.

Gray has an exquisite half-length portrait of a little girl, charmingly composed and deliciously colored. Elliott has the same strong, manly character as of old in his portraits, which are among the best he has painted. Greene contributes a capital portrait of him-

self, and that of Evangelides, noticed before in THE CRAYON.

Kensett's October day in the White Mountains, shows as well in the Exhibition as in his studio, and is an admirable picture. Cropsey's "Mediterranean Sea Coast" is a poetical piece of Italian scenery, quite in his best vein; and his Mt. Washington is one of his most successful studies of American landscape.

Church's South American Scenes are a great addition to the attractiveness of the Exhibition, and deserve very faithful attention. We shall consider them carefully in our further notices of the pictures.

Gifford's Chocorua is noteworthy as one of his best compositions. Casilear's Early Autumn has some exquisite painting in it for color and quality of distance.

Mount has two pictures which will, of course, receive our consideration by themselves. Darley's sketches are amongst the most admirable and powerful things of their kind we have ever seen, and will give many a clearer idea of his power than they have before had.

Hall exhibits a powerful study of color in a Venetian page, contrasting admirably with the quiet harmony of Rothermel's Virtuoso, near by.

Among the things noteworthy, but of which we have not space to speak at length, are the crayon heads by Lawrence, a drawing by Ruskin, miniatures by Staigg, some water-color drawings by A. Delacroix, Croyden, Wyld, Copley Fielding, and others; and portraits by Boyle, Powell, Mathews, Fuller, and others.

We write after a hasty review of the collection, and may have omitted many things of merit; but the early date of going to press does not permit a longer examination.

It may be of interest to the public to know, that the Artists, by a general appointment, meet at the Academy's Exhibition on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. These informal re-unions of the men in presence of their works will be, to those who have any artistic acquaintances, very pleasant gatherings.

FRANKLIN AND HIS STATUE.

In quoting an extract Thursday from a letter by Mr. Stillman, editor of THE CRAYON, in relation to Greenough's statue of Franklin, while we concurred very heartily in the praise bestowed upon the artist and his work, we would not be understood as assenting to the disparagement of Franklin. Mr. Stillman says of him: "He had neither faith nor heroism, but simple wit and intellectual force." If Franklin is to be charged with want of faith because he belonged to no religious sect, then we suppose the charge is not to be gainsaid. But if a man who throughout his life, his writings, his private letters, and his public speeches, manifested and professed a most profound sense of an overruling Providence and the immortality of the soul—if such a man, although he may not happen to conform to some arbitrary standard of right thinking in regard to religious matters, may be said to have faith, then Franklin had it in a most liberal degree.

With regard to his heroism, there was not the man of the revolution who manifested more of it. He was always in advance of his times on moral questions as well as political. At once

intrepid and discreet, he it was who suggested the Congress of 1774, and who first broached the plan of Union, which now binds these States. Did he display no heroism when a poor struggling printer, he preferred living on "sawdust pudding" to parting with his independence of opinion, or to running in debt? Did he show no heroism, during his long residence in England, in behalf of the Colonies, in resisting the constant pressure upon him from aristocratic quarters, to side with the royal government? Did he show none when, with Hancock, the two Adamses and other heroes, he signed the Declaration of Independence? Did he show none in his continued efforts to contrive something for the advancement of human prosperity and comfort? No heroism in his abandonment of many opportunities of securing fortune and advancement, in order that he might devote himself to philosophical studies and pursuits? No heroism in his strenuous opposition to slavery and the slave-trade, at a time when public opinion upheld them both? No heroism in his defiance of an angry and violent public sentiment, when he pleaded the cause of the then hated and down-trodden, but dreaded, Indians of Pennsylvania?

Mr. Stillman could not have hit upon a more unjust and unfortunate phrase to characterize Franklin. He was eminently marked by faith and heroism. He believed in the good time coming. He was almost enthusiastic in some of his notions. He omitted no opportunity to protest against war, and he branded the then popular custom of privateering as piracy. Franklin had his failings, but they were not those which Mr. Stillman has attributed to him.

The critic of THE CRAYON commends Mr. Greenough because he has not represented Franklin "with his head thrown back, looking at the heavens, or with eye forward for action." Franklin thus represented, says the critic, "could not have been himself." His down-cast look "expresses subtly the real character of the man," &c., &c. We are sorry to dispel a dainty conceit by a prosaic truth; but the truth is, that the committee on the statue discussed the question of the *pose* of the head, and it was generally agreed that as the statue was to be elevated some feet on a pedestal, the head ought to be cast down as if in contemplation, in order that the uplooking spectators might see it. It is the great fault of Houdon's statue of Washington, that it has its nose in the air so high, that one ought to be on a level with the face in order to appreciate the likeness fully. What Mr. Stillman, therefore, has fancifully supposed to be a studied trait is simply a position, which was believed to be the most suitable for the pedestal, without regard to the characterization of the individual.—*Boston Evening Transcript*.

I am sorry to dispel the pleasant illusion entertained by the *Transcript*, that "the critic of THE CRAYON" is caught napping. Concerning the above I have sundry things to reply. Firstly, however, I must disclaim the intention to disparage Franklin. I am not silly enough to believe myself much wiser than my generation, and if I thought him a little man, I would not say it to an American public. But the fact is, that in denying him the heroism and faith that characterizes some other men, I no more disparage him than we should Washington, by saying that he was not the philosopher and diplomatist. If Franklin made himself entirely the man Nature intended him to be, there is no higher praise than to say so, and I should as soon find fault with him for not being an artist as for not being a hero. I think that his want

of faith is proved by his constant resort to diplomacy and the force of cunning, to accomplish his ends, which the man of faith never does, but goes straight forwardly to his goal, relying for his success on the energy and immortality of truth. There are in him no wiles—no double meanings. But Franklin was a man of the world, in the better sense of that term, and would never have cast his bread on the waters, or himself on the care of Providence, without knowing the probable result of his venture. I think no one will deny this, or consider it a disparagement of Franklin, who was the grand type of the "universal Yankee nation," earnest, energetic, conscientious according to his range of moral perception, and wholly devoted to the interest of his country. He might have had a "saving faith"—he certainly had not a working one. "He believed in the good time coming," because he was philosopher enough to know it must come—he could compare cause and effect, and so worked out the problem of the revolution and its results. But this was not Faith, that does not wait on knowledge.

There are fortunately different ideals of heroism. If it be heroism to "live on saw-dust pudding," rather than run in debt, &c., I must expand my idea of the quality. To be obstinate and independent, even at the expense of life, is not always heroic, but simply manly. But, of this enough. Yankee as I am, of the blood of the Puritans, I have little sympathy with Franklin, though I admit that he was, perhaps, the most powerful worker in our national struggle, after Washington.

With regard to the "posé of the head," and its arrangement by the committee, I have only this to say. Mr. Greenough had probably something to say before the committee, and would hardly have permitted a *posé* to be taken which would interfere with his conception of the man; and, if he could not express himself with the head cast down, he would have turned it up, with only secondary consideration of its adaptation to a position; and no Boston committee could be so absurd as to order a statue for "a position which was believed to be the most suitable for a pedestal, *without regard to the characterization of the individual*." This would be like ordering a picture to fill a vacancy on the wall, and is a way of doing things which we could suppose a committee of a New York Common Council could possibly fall into, but no other—and especially gentlemen of the really classic culture of the leaders of Bostonian taste. This might have been a secondary reason, but could be no more.

It is possible that Mr. G. did not intend all that I see in the statue—an artistic result is oftentimes produced by a feeling, an instinct which the artist himself cannot account for. It is simply a perception of character which embodies itself in form without presenting itself to his reason for questioning. I assert that the statue does express that which I have claimed for it; and, if the committee chose such an attitude for topical reasons, it only proves a singular coincidence, and does not in the slightest

degree invalidate my criticism. Even if what I said had been true by chance, it is none the less true. Even if Greenough himself were to disclaim it, I should say that he had worked in obedience to some outer influence, as a "medium," as our new philosophers have it. But, an expression so just and subtle as that of the head of Franklin, could have no more come by chance than the tint of a rose could.

To suppose this, is to suppose that artists may stumble into greatness. The issue between *The Transcript* and myself, is this—is the Franklin what I represent it in its character, or is it not. I cannot, certainly, see what does not exist—and I as certainly see what I have stated—while *The Transcript* may well overlook what does exist. I may be false as a critic, but, if so, am generally sure to give the artist too much credit, rather than too little; and, if I can only persuade the public to see all that I do, the profession may have cause to regard me as a benefactor. W. J. S.

P.S.—If I mistake not, Houdon's bust of Franklin has the head thrown forward also, though not with the same expression as Greenough's. W. J. S.

NATIONAL WASHINGTON MONUMENT.—A late number of the *National Intelligencer* contains a report by a congressional committee "appointed to consider the memorial of The Washington National Monument Society," organized to erect, at the seat of government, a monument worthy of the Father of his Country. It seems that the "Society" have come to a "stand still" in their operations, and it makes a call upon Congress to help them out of their difficulties.

We are rejoiced that this work is suspended, and we earnestly recommend the people of the United States not to contribute one dollar more to the completion of this monument according to its present design. It is a tasteless, unmeaning jumble of columns surmounted by an obelisk; there seems to have been no aim in its design, except to erect something *high*, and to accomplish this, to sacrifice every noble and worthy motive belonging to a work of this character. What have Greek and Egyptian symbols to do with Washington, in a monument "so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life." The report of this committee appointed by Congress—selected with a sole view of having each member from different States, without any regard to his knowledge of Art—states that "it is a noble monument, altogether worthy of the sublime character of which it is to be a grateful testimonial;" that "it appears to be plain, yet beautiful," and they call it a "holy work," and endorse again and again "its noble proportions and beauty." They say that "such tributes are our *highest* trophies," (referring to foreign donations of blocks of stone) and the "monument will be proportionate to the character of its subject—the *loftiest* in the world." It is plain the only idea they have of a monument, is the same idea entertained by those who be-

gan the Tower of Babel, and may *this* monument meet with the same fate!

We say again, we hope the Society will not obtain another dollar to aid the completion of this excrescence.

HAVING once introduced John Muscat to our readers, we cannot dismiss him without another notice. John was a valiant man, if one could judge by the tales he told of his own prowess. He had saved many a party of travellers from "de Arab," and often wished for an opportunity to do so for us; "then gentlemen you will found I never disappoint." He croaked for ever of the Arabs and their evil ways—"you will found them great liar, scoundrel, robber, and cheat—there is no country he discover where you found so many." His valor was most apparent in certain vindictive expressions against those who had offended him by interfering with his duties, or by giving better advice than his. If, however, the offending parties were present, he had too much respect for propriety to enter into any quarrel to satisfy his desire for revenge. His self-control under such circumstances was astonishing.

But if the unfortunate individual was on the other side of some sea or other, then John would be delighted "if he found him here," or "I wish I found him in de mountain, I cut him in ten thousand pieces." Perhaps his valor was excited by his sword, for he wore a true Damascus blade purchased at Cairo, as a rare specimen of that celebrated cutlery.

In the course of our travels John made many enemies. Our dragoman, Manoli, an energetic Greek, superseded him on the desert in "getting de bed, de tent, de camel, and de provision—paying bakshish and tribute money to old Shak, keeping off de robber and cooking de dinner"—the only duty performed by John Muscat which he promised at Paris, being to wait on us at meals and in the morning. Manoli did all he could to make John Muscat comfortable, but without succeeding. John always "found himself in temper" when he began to talk about Manoli, and before the end of the journey swore he would publish him in Galignani when he got to Paris, and ruin him as a dragoman.

Another member of the party happened to excite the ire of John Muscat, but for what reason we could never learn. Perhaps it was that Bettooney, for that was the name of our excellent muleteer, happened to be an Arab. John's contempt for Arabs was too strong to be overcome by the gentleness and good humor of Bettooney. We recall with no little pleasure, the delighted expression of Bettooney's face whenever he uttered the only English words he knew—"Good morning," and "yes." Bettooney never forgot the proper words for the morning salute, but on returning the salutation with the accompaniment of "How do *you* do, Bettooney?"—the only reply was "yes, yes," "Can you sing, Bettooney?" "Yes, yes;" and hereupon Bettooney would laugh, and strike into the monotonous chant which stands for music in the East, no matter whether it proceeds from an instrument or the voice, or whether it is to be heard in a smoking café, or from the minaret of a mosque.

Many times did Bettooney's music, like the drone of a bagpipe, fill up the intervals of our weary journey, and if not the best we ever heard, was certainly good for the occasion.

What such an honest, cheerful mortal like Bettooney could have done to draw upon him the dislike of the "Father of couriers," is more than we can imagine. But such is the fact, and Bettooney added one more to the list of John Muscat's antipathies.

Another happened to be an English gentleman named Milford. John had unnecessarily offered his services both as interpreter and adviser in the bazaars of Smyrna, expecting doubt-

less to be well compensated therefor. But he was disappointed. Mr. Milford did not care to pay for his officiousness, and John never spoke of him but with temper, charging him with a meanness which he never "found" before.

The Maltese boatmen—his own countrymen—one would suppose them so deep in his affections that no circumstance whatever could turn his love to gall and bitterness. No matter what annoyance we met with—lack of comfort, exorbitant charges, poverty of people and country! "Wait, gentlemen, until you found yourself in Malta!" That island was to be the paradise of our wanderings. We finally reached Malta. No one who has not seen the natives and heard their *lingo*—a compound of Arabic and Italian—can form an idea of the confusion consequent upon landing at the port of Valetta. John's portmanteau happened to be the last one passed out of the boat, but before the hands of the lazy fellow upon the rock could receive it, the portmanteau fell into the water. When "Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war!" and apt is the quotation to suggest the wrath of Muscat! No charm that Malta possessed, its delicious oranges, its ices frozen by the snow from Mt. Etna, the romantic associations connected with the Knights of St. John, the black Faldetta, a peculiar mantle which no native woman is ever without, not even the wonderful "crucifix" possessed by the church in the parish where John was born, which "crucifix" had been a bone of contention with a neighboring parish, who had possession of it, but which miraculously appeared in his (John's) church, without having been carried there, and so ending the quarrel—not even the mention of this sacred relic, which he revered so highly, could restore his equanimity when the Maltese boatmen were even alluded to. We attempted to mollify his anger in the way of excuse for the poor boatmen, by quoting himself—"that it was fashionable to the customs of the country," but with no success.

All these incidents and persons were the objects of John's valorous indignation, and illustrate his peculiar and characteristic courage.

John Muscat had a genius for trade. He was shrewd, and never lost sight of an opportunity to "make something." He had an eye for favorable circumstances, and did not fail to take advantage of them, which was proved by a candid admission on a certain occasion, that he went to Jerusalem, not to serve our party, but to buy materials for "de water and pomade." You tink I found myself here if I could not buy de Jordan flower for de water and pomade? These two articles were his hobby. We have already mentioned the "pomade"—the "water" was intended, among other attributes, to act like magic upon grease spots, and possessed certain other virtues which, in our minds, were so confused with the pomade that we could not keep them separate. John himself would sometimes say that his rejuvenated appearance was owing now to the "pomade" and now to "de water," and as he sometimes "drink barrel of wine" we thought he might sometimes make a mistake. The "water" was distilled from certain flowers which grew in the valley of the Jordan, and certain it is John Muscat bought a quantity of a dried up vegetable production at Jerusalem, and shipped it with other goods to Paris. It was this merchandise which led to the quarrel with Manoli, the dragoman. The imposition of so much extra luggage upon Manoli, was commented upon, and John could not forgive it. John purchased a large quantity of rosaries, crosses and souvenirs of the Holy Land, blessed upon the holy sepulchre, and he calculated to reap a large profit on them when disposed of in Paris.

John Muscat's aptitude for trade led us to propose that he should come to America—that he should do so for pleasure if not for profit. We promised him honors, particularly as he had

said that, when he lived in England, he had been told he was eligible for the office of a secretary. But it was of no avail, and in a speech which he made, from what may be called a sufficiently elevated position in life—the back of a camel—he declined our proposal, and thanked us feelingly, and even with profound philosophic comment:

"Well, gentlemen, I tank you very much for your kindness, and I hope I shall do all my possible to take you over de desert in safety. Gentlemen, I have got de living enough to keep myself all de rest of my life, and I would not give five sous for all de pleasure more, and I am sorry you find yourself dissapoint about seeing me in America, and make a secretary of me, but I have not de dedication for secretary. A man, to be secretary, must have edication, politic, and everyting for foundation. If I found, gentlemen, dat I have reading and writing fluently as well as I know all language, the Lord Mayor told me when I was in London dat I be now in Bank of England. Gentlemen, I tank you for your speak of me and my pomade, and not forget de water."

With the following certificates of character, we close our sketch of John Muscat. The first we found some time since in *The Evening Post*, the second is by one of the party, composed on the journey:—

"Traveller, whoe'er thou art, wherever bound,
Listen, while I'm commending John Muscat,
Of Malta formerly, but to be found
In Paris now. He wears a small white hat,

"And may be easily known—a short grey coat
And a large watch-chain. Three studs in his shirt-
Bosom are stuck; a pleasant smile you'll note
Upon his countenance: he would not hurt

"A fly, so kind of heart is he, and willing
And ready, at a wink, to do your service—
And though the very oldest courier living,
He is as active as a dancing dervise.

"In any modern language he's *au fait*,
And, for the antique, in some of them not slow,
But then he likes, sometimes, to have his way
In managing matters, ordering and so

"Forth, which is reasonable, you'll admit,
I think, without the least reserve; if not,
He is improvable, but I'm not sit-
ting here to puff John; no, that I will not

"Do. As to malice, there's not the least bit
Of it in all his nature, which is soft
And yielding; with a very pleasant wit;
I've proved it fairly, many a time and oft.

"Let me suggest again, then, John Muscat,
As one who is the oldest and best man,
Most faithful, honest, funny, and all that
A man can be, who does the best he can."

If travellers abroad should a courier desire,
At Paris, for Monsieur John Muscat inquire;
The bare rock of Malta was the place of his birth,
But, his footprints are made in all parts of the earth.

With grammatic effect, all language he'll speak,
Spanish, English, and French, Turkish, Arab, and
Greek,
Italian and German (the last not so well,
Yet, enough for hotels, and to buy and to sell).

With a gift of all tongues, he's valiant—and strong—
In stories of conflict—immeasurably long:
He's fought with the Arab, the Turk, and the Jew,
But frightened more heathen than ever he slew.

While pacing the desert, let Arabs appear,
John rides on ahead, with an eye to the rear,
Aware that "old shaks" never let off a gun
On the man who, in front, has the best chance to run.

Alas! he's vindictive; but only at times
When telling of trouble in far distant climes;
Then, his vengeance is dire, and he threatens "to blow,"
If he "found him," both "brain and the nose" of his
foe

On mountain or plain, in the valley or dell,
Wherever he "found" one he "send him to h—":
Consul Hodge, of Marseilles—Manoli, the Greek,
Malta boatmen, Bettonee or Milford "the sneak."

His religion so striking! What doctrine so sound?
What practice more perfect, or moral profound?
Can be joined to a faith and a Christian behavior,
Which murdering foes, would yet die for "ours save-ye."

He will badger with boatmen, and bargain with Jews,
And threaten an Arab with stripes, if you choose.
Will sell a bad purchase, for only a thank 'ee,
With cunning and skill that would baffle a Yankee.

Who'er, for amusement, is willing to pay,
While plodding o'er desert and plains far away;
John Muscat's the man—of the courier race—
Called the father and leader, by general grace.

We last week neglected to say, that "The Wilderness and its Waters," of which we gave the first chapter, is the joint labor of H. K. Brown the Sculptor, and one of our contributors, Mr. Sylvester. Mr. Brown is known as one of the best fly-fishermen in the country, and to those who are interested in the art-piscatorial, there will doubtless be much of interest apart from the artistic character of the book. It will be continued in chapters as regularly as our space will permit.

A FRIEND writes from the western prairies, "Knowing the fondness of some people for sporting, particularly for having a day's shooting, you must know how I thought of them when we came over the Grand Prairie in Indiana. Prairie chickens sprung up from almost under the cars, and the air was filled with tens of thousands of wild ducks and geese. I heard the steam-whistle sound for "something on the track," and jumped up in time to see a herd of six deer bound away over the Prairie in splendid style. Think of that, oh, ye *snipe*-shooters! The scenery is magnificent on the Prairies. If not that word, what other can I use? You get out to sea on land—you look off to the horizon and see nothing but *sundown*. Next to the quantity of land that strikes the observer with wonder, is the amazing expanse of sky. It appears to be up higher and reach down further than it does at home. I encounter many fine trees, mostly oaks, and along the Wabash River I saw some noble old sycamores. But I do not mean to impose upon you a description of this great country—a perfect ocean of land which requires no tilling but the planting of the seed to secure an abundant harvest. To think of its resources and their ultimate development is overwhelming, and to form the slightest conception of it one must see it for himself."

ARTISTS will please note the advertisement of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. The Exhibition will open about the 10th of April, and all pictures intended for it must be in Philadelphia by the first proximo. Mr. W. S. Connely, jun., is the Agent of the Academy in this city, and will superintend the boxing and shipment of pictures entrusted to his charge.

WE learn from the *Christian Register*, that Miss Hosmer, the young American now pursuing her vocation as a sculptor in Gibson's Studio at Rome, is at present engaged on a group ordered by a party in St. Louis. It is a striking fact—or rather three striking facts—that a New England girl, in Italy, should be exercising her remarkable powers in a high branch of the Fine Arts, to fulfill an order from a city on the distant bank of the Mississippi!